



By Thomas Hobbs

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## ***Fruit linked to asthma reduction***

Consumption of three or more portions of fruit per week could temper severity of asthma and allergies, says new research

Eating regular portions of fruit can reduce cases of severe asthma and allergies according to a new study.

The study claims that the severity of symptoms can be reduced by 11 and 14 per cent respectively within teenagers and young children who eat three or more portions of fruit per week.

The [International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood \(ISAAC\)](#) is a collaborative effort by scientists from New Zealand, Spain, Australia, the UK and Germany, and the study also links the symptoms of severe asthma with the regular consumption of fast food.

It found that teenagers are nearly 40 per cent more likely to have severe asthma if they eat burgers and fast food more than

three times a week, while children aged six to seven with a diet of junk food were nearly 70 per cent more likely to become severe asthma sufferers.

The study focused on two different age groups: 319,000 13- to 14-year-olds from 51 countries and 181,000 six- to seven-year-olds from 31 countries, and Professor Hywel Williams, from the centre of evidence-based dermatology at Nottingham University, believes the link between allergies and fast food is an accurate one.

He said: "People often believe fast foods are associated with things like acne, obesity and hyperactivity, but not allergies, and severe allergies at that. And even if one country had such a belief, how could you explain such consistency

across so many countries and cultures and socio-economic groups?"

Meanwhile, Malayka Rahman, from Asthma UK, believes the study rightly clarifies the allergy-beating characteristics of fruit and vegetables.

She explained: "Evidence suggests that the vitamins and antioxidants found in fresh fruit and vegetables have a beneficial effect on asthma, therefore Asthma UK advises people with asthma to eat a healthy, balanced diet including five portions of fruit or vegetables every day, fish more than twice a week, and pulses more than once a week."